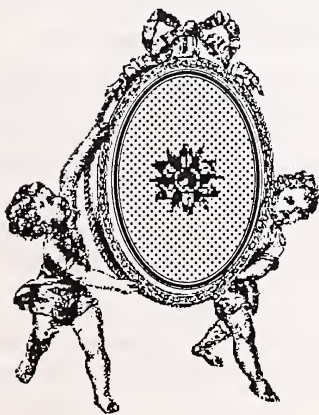




# *Alamo Square House Tour*

*October 25, 1992*



presented by

**THE VICTORIAN ALLIANCE**



## THE VICTORIAN ALLIANCE

824 Grove Street  
San Francisco, California 94117  
(415) 824-2666

### GOOD AFTERNOON!

WELCOME TO THE 1992 VICTORIAN ALLIANCE HOUSE TOUR OF ALAMO SQUARE. YOU WILL BE SEEING SIX LOVELY BUILDINGS, TWO OF WHICH ARE NOW GRAND BED-AND-BREAKFAST INNS. SAN FRANCISCO HAS A GREAT LEGACY OF VICTORIANS. THE HOUSES IN THE SEVEN HUNDRED BLOCK OF STEINER STREET ARE OFTEN PHOTOGRAPHED SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE DOWNTOWN SKYSCRAPPERS- BETTER KNOWN AS "POST CARD ROW".

ALAMO SQUARE AND THE SURROUNDING STREETS WERE LAID OUT IN APPROXIMATELY 1856 AS PART OF THE "WESTERN ADDITION". IN THE 1890'S THE AREA WAS CONSIDERED TO BE FASHIONABLE THANKS TO THE PLEASANT CLIMATE, PANORAMIC VIEWS, AND PROXIMITY TO DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICTS. GRAND MANSIONS SURROUNDED THE BLOCKS ADJACENT TO THE PARK. SADLY, THE 1950'S BROUGHT THE DESTRUCTION OF THOUSANDS OF VICTORIANS IN THE NAME OF REDEVELOPMENT. PRIVATE OWNERS REALIZED THE NEED TO RESTORE AND REHAB THE REMAINING BUILDINGS. TODAY, WE SEE THE RESULTS OF "SWEAT EQUITY" IN A REVITALIZED AREA WITH A SENSE OF NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE. ALAMO SQUARE IS A SAN FRANCISCO HISTORIC DISTRICT.

ON THE BACK PAGE OF YOUR PROGRAM YOU WILL FIND A MAP OF THE TOUR. PLEASE WATCH FOR TRAFFIC. THIS IS A HIGHLY TRAFFICKED AREA. ENJOY A VICTORIAN TEA AT THE LAST BUILDING.

SINCERELY,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vikki-Marie Powers". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline.

VIKKI-MARIE POWERS  
PRESIDENT, THE VICTORIAN ALLIANCE

## 1057 Steiner The Chateau Tivoli



This large Victorian townhouse was designed and built in 1892 by architect William H. Armitage. Born and trained in England, he made his way to San Francisco in 1883, and was regarded as one of San Francisco's leading architects. He designed and built this property for Daniel B. Jackson, an Oregon Lumber Baron and his wife Maria. They occupied this 22 room house from 1892 to 1898.

Mrs. Ernestine Kreling, widow and operator of the famous Tivoli Opera House, purchased and lived in the house from 1905 to 1917. She subsequently married William "Doc" Leahy, who became the successful manager and operator of the Tivoli. He discovered Luisa Tetrazzini, who performed at the Tivoli, and other opera singers who became world famous.

In 1917, the structure became the location for various Jewish organizations. In 1929 the Yiddish Literary and Dramatic Society created a Yiddish Cultural Center, school and restaurant. Composed of Yiddish intelligentsia who had fled Russia after the revolution of 1917 and wanted to maintain their culture in America, the house served as a center in the Bay Area from 1929 to 1961. Many wonderful concerts, plays, art exhibits, lectures, poetry readings and celebrations were held on the first floor of the building. Bernard Zakheim who painted the murals in Coit Tower, was a teacher of art at the school.

From 1961 to 1985, the building served as a rooming house and center for the New Age Movement in Psychology.

The current owners purchased the building in 1985 and are completely restoring this magnificent building to its original splendor. This beautiful Victorian Townhouse is resplendent with all hardwood floors, a grand oak staircase leading to the second floor, and stately columns between the foyer, double parlors and dining room. This unique three tone roof is composed of slate materials forming stripes and diamond patterns. The exterior of this outstanding Victorian Mansion has 22 colors with authentic gold leaf. It has received the highest architectural ratings in San Francisco for architectural significance. The book "Painted Ladies Revisited" features this Victorian.

In August of 1987, during the Harmonic Convergence, the building was rededicated to the promotion of art, music and celebration by a gathering of poets, opera singers and musicians. It once again serves as a Cultural Center, a living monument to the promotion of the Arts.



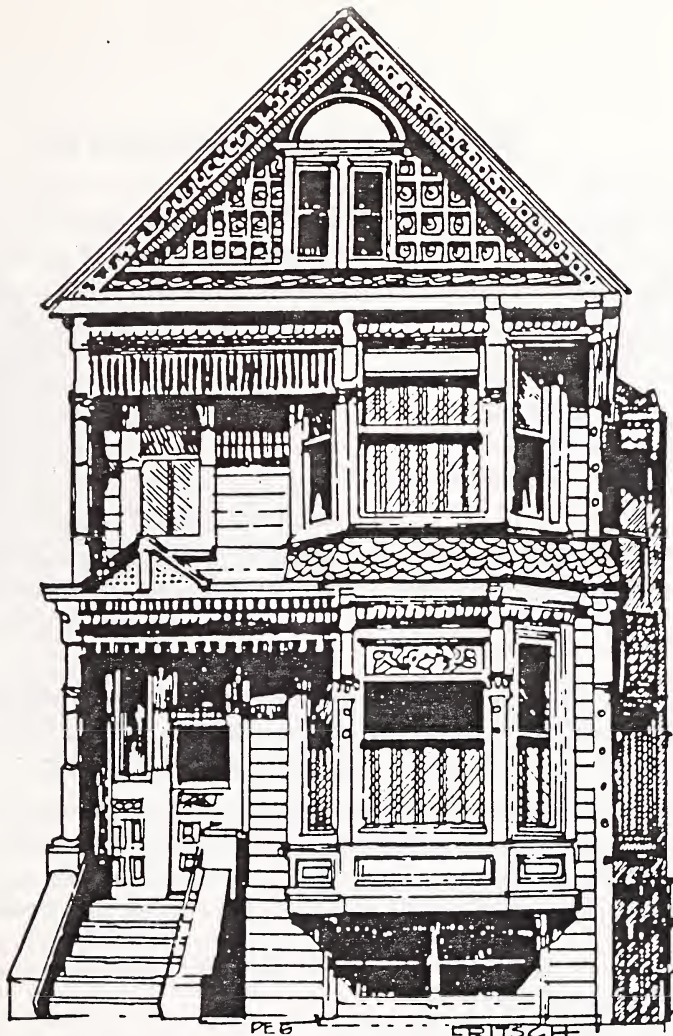
### 719 Scott The Alamo Square Inn

Water Department record show that water service was connected to this building on 22 October 1892, the owner of the record being Eliza Baum, widow, who is listed in the Blue Books and City Directories of 1895 and after, as living at 1705 Powell Street.

Like all the houses on this tour, this has had its years of opulence, passing through the ownership-occupancy of Henry Ohlandt, son of Nicholas, founder of the German bank and the National Ice Company, and one of the multi-millionaires of the time. After several other owners, including the Salvation Army, it was sold to the present owner, Wayne Corn, who made it a part of the Alamo Square Inn.

This large house is an imposing example of transitional structure, being part typical Queen Anne and part neo-classical revival. The roofline and the cantilevered circular corner bay are Queen Anne, but the exterior ornamentation and the oval window are neo-classic, possibly inspired by the "White City" of the buildings of the Columbian Exposition of the Chicago Worlds Fair of 1892. Note also that the exterior ornamentation is cast plaster, a characteristic that is beginning to replace the cut wood decoration of earlier years.





710 Steiner

This house, one of the most-photographed row in San Francisco, was connected to the City water system in 1894, on August 1. Like all the houses in this immediate area, it has enjoyed much rehabilitation from its recent owners in the past ten years, when the renaissance of Alamo Square began. The present owners have enclosed the open kitchen plan installed by recent former owners.

Built by developer Matthew Kavanaugh, this is a typical Queen Anne San Francisco row Victorian. The most fascinating feature is the great variety of ornamentation which covers nearly every inch of the facade. When you cross the street, stop to observe how the builder has deliberately varied the detail on every facade of these basically similar houses. The millwork details are particularly emphasized by the currently popular multi-colored painting scheme. The front stairs, which appear to be of a later date (see the marble stairs next door at 712) are all that appear to be altered from the original facade.

## 1021 Fulton The Alamo Square Inn



The picturesque Tudor-Revival house at 1201 Fulton was designed by Edgar Mathews and constructed in 1896 by the firm of Know and Cook at a cost of \$4,590. Its original owner was George D. Lucy, a soap manufacturer. It remained in the family until 1940, when his daughter, Dorothy sold the house to Stanley and Isabelle Taylor. They owned property on either side of the Lucy house and planned to tear down all three dwellings in order to build a high-rise apartment building.

The City vetoed the plan and Mr. Taylor was limited to building the solarium attached to the rear of the house and a foundry (now a basement) beneath it, replacing the old garden and stable. The Taylor family sold the property in the 70s, but continued to reside there until the mid-80s.

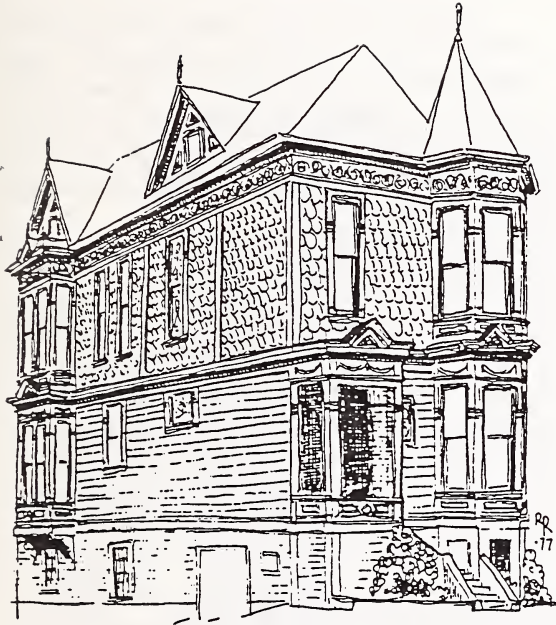
Wayne Corn, originally from South Carolina, and Klaus May, a native of Zweibrücken, Germany, now own this remarkably preserved building and use its five bedrooms as part of the Alamo Square Inn.

A San Francisco native son, Edgar Mathews (b. 1866) was considered one of the area's most progressive architects. He had been practicing his profession for only three years when he was asked to design the Lucy House. He drew from late-medieval residential forms to create his own signature Bay Area style. His exteriors and interiors alike reflected a commitment to the honest use of materials, simplicity, durability and clean lines. It was a revolt against what many critics then thought were the excessively florid styles of the last third of the nineteenth century.

Aside from its stuccoed walls and half-timbered design elements, 1201 Fulton is distinguished by hipped roofs pierced by small rectangular dormers, by windows with leaded-glass and decorative muntins, and by the low, brick wall surrounding the property.

The Craftsman interior features an entry hall dividing the living and dining rooms without obstructing partitions, a generous use of unpainted redwood wall-covering, "low" plaster ceilings, built-in window seats, cabinetry and bookcases, simple tile-surrounded fireboxes with redwood mantles, a stair-landing that is a major design element in the living room, exposed joinery and wooden floors. In a light-hearted show of proprietorship, the initials of George and Caroline Lucy are incorporated into the window decoration of the inviting entryway. It is indeed a credit to the current owners that they have left the interior in the almost pristine condition in which they found it.

## 722 Steiner



Matthew C. Kavanagh, real estate, is first listed as living at the corner of Grove and Steiner Streets in the 1893-94 City Directory. Water Department records show that water service was connected on 11 June 1892. This elaborately detailed mansion was the first built, then the one on the adjoining lot, and, finally, the rest of the row along Steiner Street facing Alamo Square. This must be one of the most frequently photographed group of houses in the City, with the high-rise downtown skyline in the background.

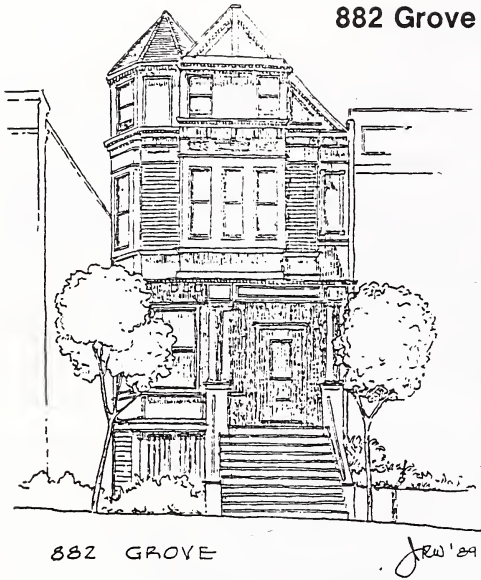
As a builder and developer, Kavanagh was quite eclectic in the choice of design and details for his house. Transcending its time, the simple lines and graceful proportions reflect the best of several eras. Appearing to be Eastlake in style, it is really Queen Anne, with typical fish scale shingles. The exterior is free of the heavy applied woodwork that was typical of the Second Empire style of two decades earlier.

One sees delicate touches of neo-classic ornament—laurel swags and acanthus leaves boldly predating trends of decades to follow. In the well thought-out composition ornament is tastefully subordinate to form, very inconsistent with its time.

This house has experienced the decline that characterized the neighborhood, having held an alcoholic de-toxification center and a nursing home, as well as other occupants, until its purchase and renovation by the present owner. Details of interior wood trim and plaster ornamentation are particularly noteworthy. The stained glass windows in the living room and on the stairs are original and are said to be of German manufacture. The windows in the entry hall, bathroom, and kitchen are of modern manufacture, created by a recent occupant of the house. The ornate mirror over the living room fireplace is an unrestored original, having been brought around the Horn from New York in 1872 for the Fulton mansion at Scott and Oak Streets, from which the present owner recently acquired it.



## 882 Grove Street The Aigeltinger House



The four story Queen Anne tower house at 882 Grove Street originally numbered 852, was commissioned in early 1893 by the widowed Ms. Caroline F. Aigeltinger. It was built on the east side lot of her residence where she and her husband, Leopold, a furrier, had lived since 1882.

Soon after she signed to have the water connected on December 19, 1893, she sold her old house and may have then moved into 882, as she retained ownership until the early 1900's.

In 1905, a pioneer San Francisco, French-American family headed by Henri Pierre Tricou rented the house and lived there for seventeen years. Among the more recent occupant-owners, one, in the early 1970's, had hoped to turn the residence into a nursing home.

Another, the Chakpoori-Ling Association, an all Caucasian group of saffron-robed adherents of Buddha, earned income by teaching and administering acupuncture.

The Aigeltinger House is quite similar to those constructed by the firm of Cranston and Keenan, noted for some of the City's most attractive row houses. It is the near duplicate of a residence at 702 Broderick which is part of one of their better known developments. It could also have been built independently by Hugh Keenan, Robert D. Cranston's Irish-born partner. Its interior floor plan and some of its decorative elements are nearly the same as those found in a home he designed at 906 Divisadero.

The Aigeltinger House is a restrained example of the Queen Anne Style popular in the 1890's. Its turret, stained glass paneling and peaked roof represent a change in fashion from the City's earlier Victorian styles.

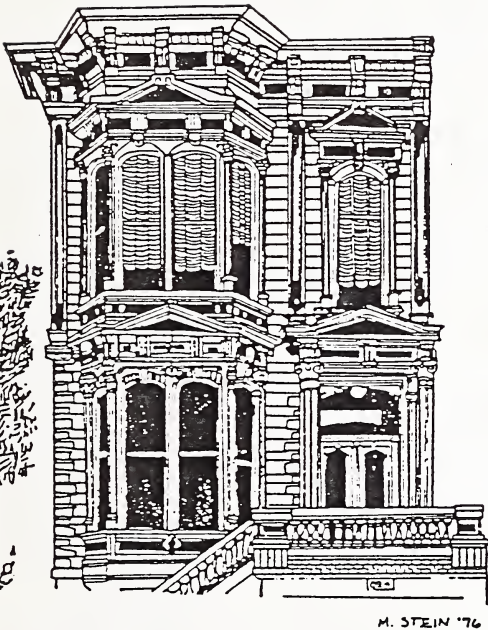
Bradbury and Bradbury wallpaper, applied in designs by Paul Duchsherer, has been used in all the major rooms. San Francisco Stained Glass Works at 345 Divisadero replicated the front window's stained glass panels. Their model was one small panel in a side window that had escaped the theft suffered by their mates approximately two decades earlier. At some point in the house's history, the staircase to what would have been a servants' unit on the bottom level was sealed off (but not removed) to create a rental unit. The concrete posts at the base of the outside front stairs and the iron railings are original. So popular was their simple style with the contractors of the 1890's, that one can easily discover, with slight variations, similar posts and railing flanking the entry stairs to many of the City's Victorian row and infill housing.



## 824 Grove

Henry Brune, of Naber, Alfs & Brune (Phoenix Bourbon Whiskey Co.) employed Henry Geilfuss to design and construct this house in 1886. The Brune family lived here from 1886 through 1906 when, after the fire, they moved to Ross. The family was listed in the San Francisco Blue Book of Society as being "at home" Tuesdays.

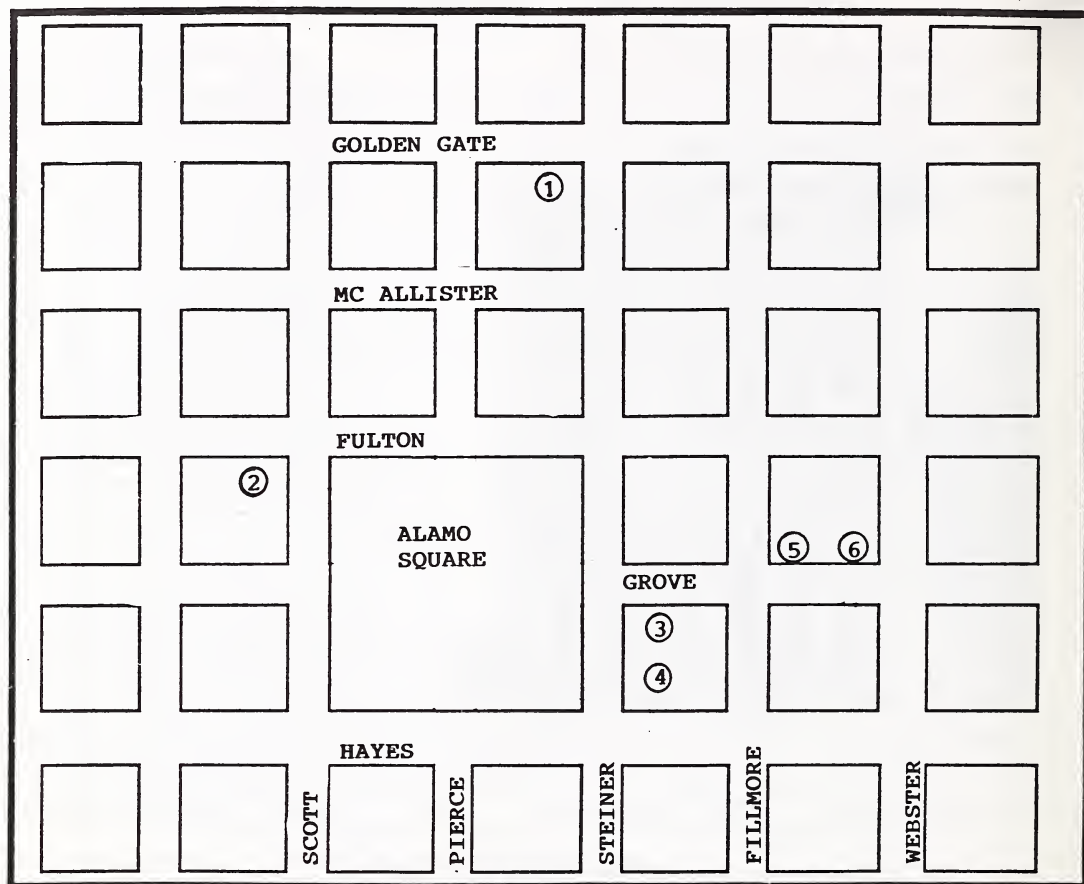
When intervening owners sold the house in the early 1950's, it became the Antioch Baptist Church for over ten years-- the ballroom being used as the church. The minister lived on the main floor and the second floor was used as a flat, then a rooming house. The project of the church to rip off the front of the house and combine the basement and first floor into a new church auditorium was fought by irate neighbors, and the building was bought and then resold to its present owner.



The architecture is basically Italianate with some Eastlake in the exterior decoration. The interior, with its 15-foot high ceilings and classical Greek and Roman woodwork, has a grand scale. The double drawing room is divided by columns with Corinthian capitals; the dining room extends the full width of the house and is dominated by a monumental sideboard. The smaller morning room has an adjoining conservatory which has been re-designed to provide an entryway and light for a small apartment in the former servants' quarters.

The five bedrooms on the second floor take advantage of every usable square foot of space. The main bathroom has its original fixtures (with new copper piping). The house was very modern for its time, with coal-burning central heating; electric starters for the gas lights and bell and speaking tube systems. The front porch was changed in 1972 to incorporate garage, deck and new front stairs.

# VICTORIAN ALLIANCE ALAMO SQUARE HOUSE TOUR



☐ 1057 STEINER

☐ 719 SCOTT

☐ 710 STEINER

☐ 722 STEINER

☐ 882 GROVE

☐ 824 GROVE  
(TEA WILL BE SERVED)

PLEASE PRESENT THIS  
CATALOG FOR ADMISSION  
TO EACH BUILDING





